United Nations A/C.1/57/PV.14

General Assembly
Fifty-seventh session

Official Records

First Committee
14th meeting
Thursday, 17 October 2002, 10 a.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Kiwanuka ..... (Uganda)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda items 57, 58 and 60 to 73 (*continued*)

Thematic discussion on item subjects and introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairman: Delegations are invited this morning to make statements on regional disarmament, confidence-building measures, including transparency in armaments and other disarmament measures and disarmament machinery. They are also invited to continue introducing draft resolutions.

Mr. Issa (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): The Egyptian delegation is delighted to introduce the draft resolution on the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East, A/C.1/57/L.27, submitted under agenda item 69. We present this draft resolution on behalf of the member States of the League of Arab States and other Member States of the United Nations.

In its preambular section, the draft resolution stresses the need to place all nuclear facilities in the region of the Middle East under full-scope safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It recalls the recommendations of Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), particularly of 1995 and 2000, regarding the importance of ensuring universal adherence to the NPT with a view to sparing ourselves the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East region and throughout the world. Indeed, nuclear facilities continue to exist in the region, facilities not subject to the full-scope safeguards system.

The preamble notes also that Israel is the only State in the Middle East that has not yet become a party to the NPT. It exhorts all the States in the region to place their nuclear activities under full-scope safeguards with a view to turning the region into a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

As to the operative portion of the draft resolution, it welcomes the recommendations issued at the 2000 NPT Review Conference and stresses the need for Israel to accede to the NPT, to place its nuclear facilities under comprehensive safeguards and to foreswear any acquisition of nuclear weapons, while acceding to the NPT as early as possible.

The Egyptian delegation would have liked to witness any progress made by Israel towards implementing this resolution over the past year. However, all the recommendations embodied in this draft are still awaiting implementation. I hope that the majority of those who traditionally vote for this resolution will once again recognize the importance that the international community attaches to the need for Israel to accede to the NPT and to do so at the earliest possible date, heeding the appeal of the international community's legality.

Allow me to submit, on behalf of the Egyptian delegation, the draft resolution dealing with the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the

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Middle East, in document A/C.1/57/L.28. This draft resolution, which has been before the First Committee since 1977, reflects the importance that the international community attaches to creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and the concrete measures that the countries of the region should take to attain this end. It also reaffirms certain major principles related to the security of nuclear-weapons facilities and to national security and the essential role the United Nations must play in establishing such a zone.

The resolution calls upon the States of the region to strive towards the establishment of this nuclear-weapon-free zone by taking concrete measures and by committing themselves to abstain from any military nuclear activities. It also calls upon parties outside the region to support efforts led by the United Nations through steps to be taken by the Secretary-General to seek the views of States in the region and other countries concerned. It requests the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of the resolution to the General Assembly.

Though the wording of this draft resolution hardly differs from the text of the resolution adopted by the General Assembly at the last session, the Egyptian delegation hopes that the consensus that this resolution has enjoyed for over 20 years will contribute to progress in its implementation at the earliest possible date.

I have the honour of submitting, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of African States, the draft resolution on the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, in document A/C.1/57/L.29.

This text deals with the role played by the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa and the need to strengthen its work, endowing it with the resources required to allow it to play an active and effective role in supporting efforts to prevent conflicts and in bringing about peace and stability and coordination between the activities of the Centre and the conflict-settlement machinery within the African Union. The draft stresses the urgent need to support the Regional Centre and to provide it with the necessary financial resources.

The sixth preambular paragraph, which is a new paragraph in this draft resolution, refers to the report of the Secretary-General and the recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services regarding the need to strengthen financial and administrative practices, in particular those concerning the Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia and the Pacific. We are mindful of the important role that these Centres play and true institutional memory that they represent for the United Nations in this arena.

In conclusion, the draft resolution reaffirms the major role played by the African Regional Centre in implementing recommendations in the Programme of Action adopted by the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in July 2001, notably at the regional level and in cooperation with the African Union.

On behalf of the African Group, we hope that this resolution will continue to enjoy the backing of the First Committee and that it will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Shobokshi (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the Committee; I should like also to congratulate the members of the Bureau. I hope that your work will be crowned with success, and assure you of my delegation's readiness to cooperate.

Moreover, I should like to express our most sincere condolences to the Indonesian delegation and, through it, to the people and the Government of Indonesia, as well as to the bereaved families of those who fell victim to the criminal act perpetrated in Bali.

During the past year, the world has witnessed serious events and has been faced with significant challenges and threats to international peace and security. The international community has definitely made significant progress in combating terrorism. Nevertheless, it is vital to continue efforts aimed at nuclear disarmament and at the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. So, too, there is a need to maintain and strengthen the comprehensive safeguards regime in the field of nuclear weapons, in order to rid the world of these weapons of mass destruction, for the sake of all humankind.

The universal and comprehensive nature of this regime must also be strengthened so that States parties can implement all of its provisions. It is also important to ensure the universal nature of the Additional

Protocol to the comprehensive safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Our delegation supports the draft resolution submitted by the brotherly country of Egypt dealing with the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, and it wishes to emphasize the fact that the creation of such a nuclear-weapon-free zone is an important prerequisite for the strengthening of peace and security at both the regional and international levels.

States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) adopted a separate resolution on the Middle East at the NPT Review and Extension Conference. Regrettably, Israel is the only State in the region that has not yet responded positively to the appeal made in that resolution to accede to the Treaty. States parties to the Treaty are called on to implement all the provisions of that resolution. The nuclear-weapon States and the sponsors of that resolution are called on to shoulder their responsibilities and to prompt Israel to submit to the obligations that the other countries in the region have undertaken with a view to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. There can be no discriminatory or selective approach here, nor can there be any policy of double standards.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which was keen on acceding to the NPT and has abided by all of its provisions, continues to stress the need to create a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The Kingdom would like to express its deep concern at Israel's intransigence and refusal to accede to the NPT and to submit its nuclear installations to the IAEA comprehensive safeguards regime. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia stresses the fact that Israel's ongoing nuclear programme outside the safeguards regime and its continued refusal to accede to the NPT represent a threat to peace and stability, both regionally and internationally, and endanger the very credibility of the NPT.

Mr. Sanders (Netherlands): It is my honour to present to this Committee, on behalf of the more than 100 sponsors we have so far, the traditional annual draft resolution on transparency in armaments (A/C.1/57/L.37). The present text of the draft resolution is an update of the resolution that we submitted last year, which was adopted by an overwhelming majority.

Transparency in armaments is one of the major confidence-building principles among States which enables the international community to be better informed about military matters and developments. Transparency in armaments thus diminishes misperceptions and helps to avoid the distortion of information.

An important instrument of transparency in armaments in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, which is celebrating its tenth anniversary this year. Earlier this week, a symposium was organized by Japan, the Netherlands and the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs to mark this occasion.

In the United Nations Register, Member States are requested to report, on a voluntary basis, on imports and exports of seven categories of major conventional arms, and, if they so desire, on their holdings. Over the last 10 years, more than 162 Governments have participated one or more times in this reporting instrument, while almost all of the major producers, exporters and importers of conventional arms have reported regularly to the Register.

The United Nations Secretariat estimates that the Register captures more than 95 per cent of the global trade in the seven categories of conventional arms covered by the Register. The Register has developed steadily over the years. It has established a de facto norm of transparency in armaments which Governments must take into account. It provides a significant amount of information, officially reported by Governments, which otherwise would not have been available. This information provides a legitimate basis for regional and interregional consultations between Governments.

The Register also performs an important role in public information, promoting accountability of political and military leaderships. The Register also has stimulated many Governments to improve their national systems for monitoring and controlling arms transfers. Finally, the Register has set an example for new regional initiatives, such as the Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisitions.

Increased participation by Member States over the years demonstrates the growing confidence that transparency can also help prevent the excessive accumulation of arms by encouraging self-restraint in

military production and in the transfer of arms; and help ease tensions and strengthen regional and international peace and security.

We believe, therefore, that the international community should continue to improve and further develop the Register, both in terms of participation and in terms of scope of reporting. The Group of Experts, to be reconvened in 2003, will give us such an opportunity.

Notwithstanding all the good news this year on the Register, we are still far from having achieved true universal participation in the instrument. In this context, it is important to note that the concept of transparency in armaments is certainly not restricted to conventional arms only. The desirability of transparency applies as much to weapons of mass destruction as it does to conventional weapons. Multilateral treaties related to weapons of mass destruction already exist; there will be more, and such treaties provide for their own mechanisms to ensure transparency in weapons of mass destruction. The Netherlands will continue to work actively to promote greater transparency in the field of weapons of mass destruction.

I sincerely hope, therefore, that the Committee will continue to give widespread support to the draft resolution on transparency in armaments in general and to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms in particular, hopefully by adopting a draft resolution by consensus at some point in the future.

Mr. Al-Banai (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country has the honour of chairing the Arab Group this month. I welcome this opportunity to make a statement on behalf of the League of Arab States, which would like to reaffirm its position, as stated in 2 October 2000, with regard to transparency in armaments, in particular with regard to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. For a number of consecutive years, the States members of the Arab League have been making clear their position on the issue of transparency and their vision concerning the Register. It is a clear-cut and stable view, based essentially on matters involving global disarmament and a regional plan determined by the particular situation in the Middle East.

The States members of the Arab League support transparency in armaments as a measure for consolidating peace and security worldwide, because they are convinced that such transparency must be governed by basic principles that are clearly determined, balanced, all-encompassing, non-selective and aimed at the consolidation of international, regional and national security, in keeping with international law.

The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms represents the first attempt by the international community to resolve issues of transparency at the international level. Although the key potential value of the Register is its role as a confidence-building measure and as an undisputed early warning mechanism, it has met with many obstacles, resulting mainly from the fact that almost half of the membership of the United Nations has consistently failed to supply information to it. In this connection, the States members of the Arab League believe that we must expand the Register, especially since past experience with conventional arms suggests that States, including some Arab States, participate in the Register precisely because it is limited in scope and thus far does not fully address current security needs.

The future success of the Register will depend on the readiness of the international community to build greater confidence and transparency. The Register, in line with General Assembly resolution 46/36, which provided for its establishment and called for the provision of information on advanced conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction, notably with regard to nuclear weapons and related advanced military technology, could become a more balanced, all-encompassing and less discriminatory tool and could thus attract more participants.

The Middle East region is in a unique position as a result of the qualitative imbalance with regard to weapons within it and because of the fact that transparency and confidence can be achieved only if a proper and comprehensive balance is struck with regard to such weapons. Bringing about transparency in the Middle East on seven categories of conventional weapons while leaving out more lethal, advanced and complex weapons, such as weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, is an unbalanced and incomprehensive approach and is an obstacle to the achievement of the results that we hope for. It does not take into account the current situation in the Middle East. Israel continues to occupy Arab land, and it possesses nuclear weapons — the most lethal weapons of mass destruction — and is the only State in

the region not to have submitted its nuclear installations to the comprehensive safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency; nor has it acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

The parties to the NPT, at the 2000 Review Conference, all stressed the need for Israel to accede to the Treaty and to place its facilities under the Agency's comprehensive safeguards system. The States members of the Arab League regret the failure of the group of governmental experts that met in 2000, as well as that of other expert-level meetings, to expand the Register to include military acquisitions and domestically produced weapons, as well as weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons. That failure goes against the very rationale of the Register; it is a sign of its static nature and its unsuitability to current needs, in its present form, as an effective tool for confidence-building and as an early warning mechanism.

The States members of the Arab League would thus like to see full international participation in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms so that it can play its proper role of confidence-building and early warning. We call for progress along those lines.

Mr. Pant (Nepal): I should like to begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the responsible position of Chairman of the First Committee. We assure you of our fullest cooperation in the exercise of your duty as you steer the Committee's affairs to a successful conclusion.

I should like to take this opportunity, on behalf of my Government and the people of Nepal, to extend our heartfelt condolences to the Government of Indonesia and, through it, to the families of the innocent victims of the terrorist attack in Bali. As an ardent believer in the culture of peace and tolerance, Nepal abhors and condemns that criminal act and calls upon the international community to work together in tightening the noose on the perpetrators of such heinous acts against humanity.

Having made those comments, I would like to introduce a draft resolution under agenda item 67 (h), entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific".

The draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/57/L.35 has been sponsored to date by Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Thailand, Tonga, Viet Nam and my own country, Nepal.

While most paragraphs of the draft resolution remain unchanged — except for the purpose of updating — the second and eighth preambular paragraphs underscore the validity of the Centre as a vehicle to promote peace and disarmament in the region, as is reflected in the Secretary-General's report on the subject. Likewise, the draft resolution, through its operative paragraph 6, embodies the genuine desire of all the sponsors to see the Centre function effectively from its designated location — that is, from Kathmandu — upon conclusion of the host country agreement.

We the sponsors are confident that the draft resolution would bring about concrete results by way of ensuring an early relocation of the Centre from New York to Kathmandu and would address the concerns of the people in the region through an increased focus on galvanizing the pace and the process of regional disarmament. It is also the sincere hope of my delegation, as well as of the other sponsors, that the draft resolution, as has become customary, will be adopted without a vote.

The Chairman: I thank the representative of Nepal for the kind words that he addressed to the Bureau.

Mr. Umer (Pakistan): The purpose of this intervention is to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/57/L.39, entitled "Regional disarmament", on behalf of the delegations of Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Nepal, Nigeria, Peru, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Turkey and my own delegation.

International security and disarmament are interlinked and need to be pursued globally and at the regional level. While international disarmament measures are vital, in most instances security and disarmament can be most effectively promoted at the regional level. As the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/57/L.39 notes, the guidelines and

recommendations for regional approaches towards disarmament, within the context of global security, were adopted by the Disarmament Commission in 1993. Those guidelines remain relevant in the present day to promoting regional disarmament in the conventional and non-conventional fields.

It is now quite evident that, in most areas of tension and potential conflict, the regional approach could offer a most effective basis for the promotion of disarmament and the enhancement of security. Accordingly, the draft resolution notes the recent proposals for disarmament at the regional and subregional levels and expresses the conviction that endeavours to promote regional disarmament, taking into account the specific characteristics of each region and in accordance with the principle of undiminished security at the lowest level of armaments, enhance the security of all States. The draft resolution, therefore, stresses the need for sustained efforts in that direction, affirms that regional approaches for disarmament complement each other, and calls on States to conclude agreements where possible. It welcomes the initiatives towards disarmament, non-proliferation and security undertaken by some countries at the regional and subregional levels, while encouraging and supporting confidence-building measures.

Adoption of this draft resolution will encourage the concerned countries to pursue endeavours for regional disarmament and will help to strengthen regional and international security. It is, therefore, the hope of the sponsors that, as was the case last year, the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/57/L.39, on regional disarmament, will be adopted without a vote.

The Chairman: I thank the representative of Pakistan for the kind words that he addressed to the Chair.

Mr. Handzlik (Poland): As my delegation is taking the floor for the first time, I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your election to preside over the work of the First Committee during this session of the General Assembly.

It is a privilege for me to address this important forum of experts and disarmament luminaries, having long been involved in the question of weapons of mass destruction and missile proliferation. This is the proper forum and the perfect opportunity to share a few observations about Poland's position on those issues.

First, I should like to note the change that has occurred over the past few months with regard to the international security environment. The events of 11 September 2001 demonstrate the kind of change that has taken place. There is a new general awareness of threats. That fact alone highlights all of the threats that societies and the international community as a whole must deal with in the years ahead. That is not to suggest that terrorism is likely to be the only kind of challenge or threat to our security, regardless of the part of the world that we come from.

Even now, threats are identified in many documents — whether adopted by the United Nations or by original security structures — or are otherwise reflected in various national security doctrines. Those threats no longer have boundaries. They may stem from local crises and conflicts or from local terrorism; they may be inherent in the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery; they may be rooted in the information age. In any case, they now transcend all boundaries. Today, each geographical region or State faces threats that are familiar and common.

The Polish Government attaches the highest importance to non-proliferation, arms limitation, disarmament and export control. The Government of Poland sees those as tools to be used in combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, where missiles and related technologies play the key role. In some ways, the world is becoming a more dangerous place as certain countries and non-State actors look for technologies and weapons that can threaten our existence. Now, more than ever before, the international community needs to implement effective ways and means of regulating the export of essentially dangerous technologies, goods and dual-use items, while addressing the national imperatives of economic growth and social development. Today, the threat posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missiles is more diverse and unpredictable than it has ever been. That must be of serious concern to all of us; it is a problem that we all must tackle together.

In that connection, I should like to refer to the Fourth International Conference on Export Controls, held recently at Warsaw under the patronage of the President of the Republic of Poland. One of the many important conclusions of the Conference was that the international community must continue to search for

new and adequate mechanisms to deal with the problem as a whole.

At the same time, it is important to use the tools that we already have and to ensure that they are being used effectively in a mutually reinforcing way. These tools must be kept sharp, and they must be kept in good condition, so that the international community can continue developing and deploying them effectively. Some of the principal tools are diplomacy, deterrence, denial and disruption.

It goes without saying that the international community must make a constructive contribution these days in the fields of non-proliferation, export control, disarmament and arms limitation. These steps are aimed, on the one hand, at preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means of their delivery, and, on the other, developing effective and non-discriminatory international verification and control mechanisms.

The tragic events of 11 September have shown us the desperate need to attain a higher standard of security. We must now make joint efforts to consolidate international security, in particular on the regional scale. We cannot afford not to work together. The international community now has a rare opportunity to radically downgrade the role of missiles in military doctrines.

Efforts to stabilize the international situation can in no way be limited to the defence area alone. Of critical importance is the constructive application of diplomacy and available legal means to promote democracy, human rights, freedom and civil society. At the same time, we cannot shut our eyes to the immediate threats that derive from existing weapons of mass destruction, the development of new types of weapons and the steady erosion of arms control and disarmament agreements. Nor can we overlook the lack of control of access to such weapons by non-State — and, hence, uncontrollable — actors.

As stated in the report on the issue of missiles in all its aspects, prepared by the Panel of Governmental Experts for the Secretary-General, the current situation in the field of missiles is a serious threat to international peace and security. The report notes that there are multiple approaches currently being undertaken at the national, bilateral, regional, and multilateral levels, dealing with the issue of missiles, both within and outside the United Nations.

As the destabilizing effects of missiles and related technology become ever more evident, the international community is becoming increasingly worried over existing gaps in international norms against the proliferation of missiles. Until now, we have only seen initiatives that applied to three areas: limitation and elimination of military missile inventory; missile launch transparency; and the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear-armed missiles. It seems that the only multilateral mechanism explicitly addressing the issue of the threat of ballistic missile proliferation is a universally acceptable draft of an international code of conduct against ballistic missile proliferation. Initially developed by the members of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR, 1987), it is now open to all States, to be adopted in the near future during the International Conference, which will be held in November in The Hague.

The code, as proposed, is to be a politically binding agreement to promote the prevention and curbing of the proliferation of ballistic missile systems and to develop norms on missile behaviour. Furthermore, this agreement would promote confidence regarding missile and space launch vehicle activities. The agreement is intended to establish global principles, commitments to transparency and other confidence-building measures that address the proliferation of ballistic missiles capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction. The code should be seen as the first step towards building a widely subscribed-to multilateral document that addresses the proliferation of ballistic missiles. It would appeal to States to cooperate on a voluntary basis in curbing ballistic missile proliferation. In order for the code to succeed, it must be subscribed to by a large number of countries from all regions.

Thus far, as the fear of proliferation grows, based on political, economic and technological developments, both from countries that supply it and those that demand it, the MTCR is the only multilateral mechanism that explicitly addresses the issue. What this amounts to is a set of policy guidelines accepted so far by 33 States which have agreed to coordinate their export control policies based on common guidelines and on a shared list of controlled items which each partner implements through its own national legislation.

It is clear that an arrangement like the MTCR is becoming increasingly important when the threat of missiles is taking on new and ominous forms. A number of States have crossed the missile threshold, while others appear to have similar ambitions. Some States, capable of using missiles, are said to be trying to develop warheads with weapons of mass destruction. The international community is ever more anxious about effective measures to check this dangerous trend. In order to deal with self-evident concerns, the MTCR should be joined by all missile-producing States. The universalization of MTCR guidelines and procedures is, and will be, the way to successfully impede the proliferation of missiles and technologies.

In this connection, I should like to refer to the results of the 17th MTCR plenary meeting, held in Warsaw between 21 and 27 September. This important event marked the start of Poland's chairmanship of the Regime for 2002 and 2003. The 33 members mandated the Polish chair to pursue a range of contacts with non-partners, through MTCR-sponsored workshops, seminars and information sessions concerning the MTCR's goals, with a focus on such topics as export control policies, procedures, related legislation, control lists, trans-shipment, transit and enforcement. Referring to the worldwide fight against terrorism, the MTCR partners agreed to issue a statement on Joint Action, in which they stated that the MTCR would continue contributing to the fight against terrorism by limiting the risk of controlled items and technologies falling into the hands of groups and/or individuals who pose a risk. The Joint Action statement also called upon all States to take similar action. But no one should be expected to do this in isolation; we should work in partnership to tackle threats and the risks that we all share.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that the MTCR, chaired by Poland, will make every possible effort to curb the proliferation of delivery vehicles for weapons of mass destruction in order to foster regional and international security.

The Chairman: I thank the representative of Poland for his kind words addressed to the Chair.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Hungary, Ambassador Tibor Toth, President of the Fifth Review Conference on the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), who will introduce draft decision A/C.1/57/L.22.

Mr. Toth (Hungary): First of all, Mr. Chairman, may I congratulate you on your election. With your permission, I would like to introduce draft decision A/C.1/57/L.22. In addition, I would like to make a couple of comments on the issue of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC).

Draft decision A/C.1/57/L.22 is straightforward. In its operative paragraph it requests the Secretary-General to continue to render the necessary assistance to depositary Governments of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), to provide such services as may be required for the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the review conferences, as well as the decisions contained in the final report of the Special Conference of 1994, and to render the necessary assistance and provide such services as may be required for the Fifth Review Conference, which will reconvene at Geneva from 11 to 22 November 2002. I wish to express the hope that draft decision A/C.1/57/L.22 will be adopted the same way it was last year, without a vote.

I would like to make a couple of comments on the Biological Weapons Convention. In the course of the past year or so, a new realism has been emerging about deliberate diseases. The anthrax incident, against the tragic background of 11 September, clearly demonstrated the potential consequences for any society, if, notwithstanding the norm — prevention or deterrence — the genie of misuse of biotechnology or biodefence gets out of the bottle.

There is much broader public awareness of the threat by now. First, the destructive potential of deliberate disease as a weapon, or as a weapon of terror, is second to none. Minuscule quantities of biological agents used in an efficient way could cause massive disruption of life, widespread terror and critical disruption of basic societal activities. Secondly, however treacherous biological weapons are, once prevention fails and those weapons are used, it is difficult to ascertain the exact scope of their use to identify victims, find a perpetrator and find the place and infrastructure where the substances were developed and produced. Thirdly, the challenge is not just hype, existing as mere fiction. Deliberate disease is a real and present danger.

As a result of the serious setbacks encountered in the past 18 months, there is a new realism emerging about the Biological Weapons Convention regime as

well. There is a less ambitious, yet still meaningful role, to be assigned to the regime. We should be candid with ourselves and the outside world. That potentially new role is different than building in a holistic way an all-encompassing compliance system. But it is becoming more and more evident that, even in a more realistic role, the Biological Weapons Convention regime can provide a unique framework for measures to benchmark and enhance implementation and to decrease the likelihood of deliberate, accidental or naturally occurring diseases that take a high toll.

It can be done through successive steps — measures that would not necessarily be legally binding, and efforts undertaken both nationally and internationally. The purpose of such an incremental advance is not just to take action to make ourselves busy. To the contrary, as the encouraging example of the regulatory and safety activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) historically prove, such an incremental advance is feasible and meaningful.

This is not a silver bullet function for the BWC regime, but a task to work together synergistically with other tools. To reach the critical mass of decision for such a complementary role, some basic questions will have to be answered. First, beyond norm-setting, is there any real-life functional requirement for the BWC regime? Secondly, could all other containment and mitigation means, such as export controls, non-proliferation, defence, civilian defence, preparedness, vaccination and disease control, individually or collectively handle the whole spectrum of the threat without any margin of error, thus making complementary tools like the BWC regime redundant? Thirdly, is there a premium on preventive measures, such as identifying and rectifying implementation deficiencies, compared to those measures that are aimed at mitigating the consequences of deliberate or accidental disease?

In the wake of 11 September and the anthrax incident, there has been a significant increase of potential and investment in export controls, non-proliferation, defence, civilian defence, preparedness, vaccination, disease surveillance, and control and management efforts all around the world. The dilemma is whether any country or authority can claim, with the necessary degree of assurance, that all those means, with additional investment, will ensure not just a mere quantitative increase in safety, compared to all the bottlenecks of the pre-anthrax incident security world, but that they would also guarantee a new quality of biosecurity. In other words, will those means, under any circumstance, leave any margin for error in the future? If the slightest doubt exists that, notwithstanding all resolve, efforts and investments, there still might be a future margin for error, writing off the BWC regime or declaring it redundant is an unaffordable luxury.

Compared to other means, the potential contribution of the BWC regime is relatively cost effective, both politically and in terms of resources. It could be cost effective politically because it can provide timely warning about implementation deficiencies, enabling problems to be rectified or addressed in a preventive way, either within or outside the BWC regime. As for resource allocation, such measures are cost effective as well because they have a combined price tag whose magnitude is several degrees lower than the cost and resource implications of other equally useful but more expensive means, such as those for mitigating the consequences of deliberate or accidental disease.

We should turn present challenges into opportunity. The Fifth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, to be reconvened on 11 November 2002, will provide a chance to unfold in a realistic and incremental manner the unused potential of the BWC regime. Nearly a year ago, at the Fifth Review Conference, we could not reach such an agreement, although we came close to it. The three rounds of informal presidential consultations I carried out in the spring, summer and autumn of this year revealed, hopefully not just to me, but to all the parties, that a forward-looking, modest but meaningful agreement on the follow-up to the Review Conference is within reach.

Since the summer round of those consultations, there has been growing support for focusing a resumed review conference specifically on follow-up, and then on wrapping up its work swiftly. The follow-up mechanism would enable States parties to meet annually and consider measures to strengthen the BWC. Such annual meetings could be supplemented by experts' meetings for enhancing the implementation of measures forwarded by consensus. Both the annual meeting of States parties and the experts' meetings will have to concentrate on a relatively limited number of issues to ensure that focused and results-oriented work

is taking place in the limited time available annually for those meetings. The programme of work for the next couple of years should outline how to carry forward the work in a way that, by the beginning of the next review conference, the mechanism indeed produces concrete and effective measures.

Compared to all previous review conferences, such a follow-up mechanism would represent a qualitatively new product — an agreement on both the ways and means of enhancing the implementation of measures to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention.

By now we know too well where our differences lie. The emerging new realities about this threat and the role of the Biological Weapons Convention should be based on what is a shared aspiration for all of us: joining efforts in countering deliberate disease. Once that goal is taken seriously, we cannot afford to be bogged down on the methodological differences of how to attain that goal. Let us concentrate on what we can agree on now. Let us do it and, as a result of measurable progress, let us create new ground for further joint action.

Mr. Rybakov (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): Not only has conventional arms control not lost its relevance today but, on the contrary, it is gaining increasing significance on the regional and subregional levels. The spread of conventional weapons in a particular region and the lack of effective control and verification mechanisms have the potential to threaten global security and stability. The rise of tensions in a given region and the uncontrolled deployment of arms and military technology can develop into armed conflicts that can spread to other regions as well.

The Republic of Belarus believes that confidence-building and security measures constitute key elements in conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels. The primary goal of confidence-building and security measures in conventional arms control is to strengthen regional security as an active element of international security and to reduce the risk of the outbreak of armed conflict. The development of confidence-building and security measures objectively promotes a reduction in the risk for misunderstanding and miscalculation of military activities, averts military confrontation and lowers the risk of certain attack and the outbreak of war as a result of a military incident. In creating in a region a climate in which the importance of the military element is gradually diminishing, confidence-building and security measures can promote a process of balanced arms reduction and a more effective functioning of verification regimes.

We welcome the efforts of countries that have concluded appropriate bilateral and multilateral agreements on confidence-building and security measures in the military and political spheres. We call upon other States to support initiatives aimed at achieving agreements on confidence-building and security measures in the area of conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels.

In our view, the best approach to establishing and consistently developing confidence-building and security measures in the military and political spheres is one that provides for flexibility and for the implementation of shared interests in the area of regional security and conventional arms control. Moreover, in so doing there must be a guarantee of the inalienable right of a State to an adequate level of security, on the understanding that no single State or group of States parties to agreements on confidence-building and security measures will attempt to gain advantages over another party at any stage of the implementation and development of confidence-building and security measures.

In citing the example of regional agreements on conventional arms control, I would like once again to note the role and significance on the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, which is a key element of European security. The Republic of Belarus was an active party in the negotiating process on the adaptation of the Treaty to new geopolitical conditions in Europe, and, in the year 2000, was first among States parties to ratify the Agreement on Adaptation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. The adapted Treaty signals a shift from old relations in Europe during the time of the cold war, which were characterized by bloc confrontation and resistance, to a new stage based on cooperation and confidence. The adaptation of the Treaty also made possible the accession of new States to it.

The Republic of Belarus favours the speedy entry into force of the adapted Treaty, as well as the accession of new members to the Treaty. In our view, this will make it possible to conclude the building of a new architecture for European security, to strengthen confidence and enhance transparency in a region

ranging from Vancouver to Vladivostok, and serve as a good incentive and example for States in other regions of the world. In that regard, we urgently call on States parties to the Treaty that have not yet ratified the Agreement on Adaptation to do so as soon as possible.

We also support the idea of considering the matter of drafting principles that could serve as a basis for regional agreements on conventional arms control at the Conference on Disarmament.

In conclusion, emphasizing the consistency of its policy in the sphere of international security and conventional arms control, the Republic of Belarus is once again a sponsor of the draft resolution entitled "Conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels".

The Chairman: I now give the floor to the representative of the Central African Republic to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.15.

Mr. Poukré-Kono (Central African Republic) (*spoke in French*): As this is the first time I take the floor in the First Committee, allow me, on behalf of the delegation of the Central African Republic, to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your election to the chairmanship. I have no doubt that, given your talents as an experienced diplomat, the work of the First Committee will be a success. My congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau.

I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/57/L.15, entitled "Regional confidence-building measures: activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa". I am introducing this draft resolution on behalf of the following members of the Committee: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Guinea, the Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Sao Tome and Principe.

The objective of the Standing Advisory Committee, which was established on 28 May 1992, is to promote arms limitation, disarmament, non-proliferation and development in the subregion in order to address the concerns associated with the spread of conflict in that part of Africa. Maintaining an international balance necessarily involves confidence-building measures, both domestically and externally. It is therefore indispensable that the member States of the Committee follow a code of conduct in their relations. Mutual confidence must continually be renewed to guarantee the stability lacking in the region.

The efforts made by the United Nations to maintain international peace and security address those concerns. Since its establishment, the Standing Advisory Committee has in fact committed itself to a process conducive to building confidence among and between States. Its member States have therefore agreed to pursue cooperation and a concerted approach among the security forces of the countries of Central Africa, in particular by holding regular meetings and joint exercises, carrying out joint border patrols, holding meetings between administrative and military authorities on the border to reduce tensions between populations and reinforce confidence, and holding bilateral and multilateral summit meetings to deal with security issues.

Those few achievements well illustrate the degree of awareness among the States of the subregion of the need to continue to pursue peace efforts so that development may become a reality.

Peace has no price and development cannot be achieved without it. Thus, the triptych of peace, security and development dovetails directly into efforts to achieve disarmament, the dividends of which would benefit economic and social development.

The text of the draft resolution under consideration does not differ radically in either substance or form from that of preceding years. What we feel to be of the essence is the message it sends to the General Assembly to take note of the Secretary-General's report and to reaffirm its support for efforts aimed at promoting confidence-building measures at regional and subregional levels in order to ease tensions and conflicts in Central Africa and to further peace, stability and sustainable development in the subregion, as stipulated in operative paragraphs 1 and 2.

The Assembly would also reaffirm its support for the programme of work of the Standing Advisory Committee adopted at the organizational meeting of the Committee, held at Yaoundé from 27 to 31 July 1992. The programme represents the basic premise for programmes already drafted and under way.

In paragraph 4, which contains new elements, the Assembly would note with satisfaction the progress

made by the States members of the Committee for the period 2001-2002, in particular by holding a Subregional Conference on the Protection of Women and Children in Armed Conflict in Central Africa at Kinshasa from 14 to 16 November 2001; holding a meeting of Chiefs of Staff of the member States of the Standing Advisory Committee at Libreville from 18 to 20 March 2002; holding the seventeenth ministerial meeting of the Standing Advisory Committee at Kinshasa from 22 to 26 April 2002; holding the subregional consultation on the theme "Parity and development: Participation of the Central African woman" at Douala from 28 to 30 May 2002; and holding the eighteenth ministerial meeting of the Standing Advisory Committee at Bangui from 26 to 30 August 2002.

In paragraph 5, the General Assembly would emphasize the importance of providing the States members of the Committee with the essential support they need to carry out the full programme of activities which they adopted at their ministerial meetings.

In paragraph 8, it would request the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to continue to provide their full assistance for the proper functioning of the Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa.

In paragraph 9, the Assembly would request the Secretary-General, pursuant to Security Council resolution 1197 (1998), to provide the States members of the Standing Advisory Committee with the necessary support for the implementation and smooth functioning of the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa and the early-warning mechanism.

In paragraph 13, the General Assembly would appeal to Member States and to governmental and non-governmental organizations to make additional voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for the implementation of the programme of work of the Standing Advisory Committee.

In paragraph 14, the Secretary-General would be requested to continue to provide the States members of the Standing Advisory Committee with assistance to ensure that they are able to carry on their efforts.

In conclusion, I express the hope that draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.15 — which, on behalf of the members of the Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, I submit to the benevolent attention of member States for their essential support — will be adopted by consensus, as in previous years.

Mr. Al-Otaiba (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the delegation of the United Arab Emirates, I would like to express my appreciation, Sir, for your valuable efforts in directing the deliberations of this Committee.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various regions of the world is a great contribution to preventing the proliferation of such weapons and to reducing the danger of a nuclear war. It is also one of the principal measures designed to eliminate the threat of nuclear weapons and to achieve total and comprehensive disarmament.

The United Arab Emirates, realizing that the establishment of such zones is a main step towards achieving the goals of nuclear disarmament in particular, and disarmament in general, endorses all General Assembly resolutions regarding the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, above all nuclear weapons, in the Middle East, and we support all efforts made to fulfil it. Moreover, the United Arab Emirates has taken concrete steps toward that goal by acceding to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

The Middle East region is ruled by an obvious imbalance in power, due to the fact that Israel, an occupying country that practices terrorism and military aggressor in the occupied Palestinian lands, possesses a huge arsenal of weapons, nuclear weapons in particular. In addition, it refuses to join the NPT and to subject its nuclear facilities to the comprehensive safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), thus posing a direct threat to the security of the Arab nations, weakening the credibility and universality of the NPT and hindering the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, leading to the perpetuation of the security imbalance in the region.

In 1974, the General Assembly called for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. In 1980, the resolution concerning this issue gained impetus and importance after it was adopted unanimously. Moreover, the resolutions on the Middle East, adopted by States parties at the two Conferences for the revision and extension of the NPT

in 1995 and 2000, call on all countries to take practical measures, inter alia, to achieve progress towards the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction, and nuclear, chemical and biological weapons in particular, and their means of delivery. They also call for the verification of these measures and for no step to be taken to oppose such measures. States parties, in the Final Document issued at the 2000 Review Conference, also insisted on the importance of Israel's acceding to the NPT and subjecting its nuclear facilities to the comprehensive safeguards regime of the IAEA.

The United Arab Emirates attaches great importance to making the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons. It also reiterates its conviction that establishing a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East requires the implementation of paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991), in accordance with Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, by which it calls for the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free from weapons of mass destruction.

Accordingly, we call, first, for Israel, the only party in the Middle East that has not yet acceded, to accede unconditionally to the NPT, to subject its nuclear facilities to the comprehensive safeguards regime of the IAEA and to eliminate all its weapons of mass destruction, especially its nuclear weapons, in accordance with the Security Council resolution 687 (1991). Secondly, the nuclear-weapon States, in particular those that are permanent members of the Security Council, must assume their responsibility for ensuring the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear weapons in the Middle East as soon as possible, given the explosive situation in the region, which jeopardizes all attempts to achieve peace and security there. Thirdly, the NPT must be implemented by all parties in the region without exception. Fourthly, comprehensive nuclear-weapon disarmament in the Middle East should not constitute an obstacle to the acquisition of know-how or to the peaceful scientific uses of nuclear energy.

In conclusion, we hope that our deliberations will lead to the attainment of the desired objectives through the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East as soon as possible.

The Chairman: I thank the representative of the United Arab Emirates for his kind words.

Mr. Atieh (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation supports the draft resolution submitted by the delegation of the Arab Republic of Egypt, entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East". I should like to clarify a few points in that regard.

First, Syria was among the first States in the Middle East region to sign the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Our Legislative Act 169 of 1969 contained Syria's accession to the Treaty. Syria is at the forefront of the movement to rid the Middle East region of all weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, as a result of our conviction that the possession of such destructive weapons by any State in the region would constitute a threat and a source of profound concern, not only for the States of the region but also for all States of the world.

Secondly, all Arab States have acceded to the NPT. However, Israel still refuses to accede to the Treaty, and it also refuses to sign a comprehensive safeguard agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) or to subject all its nuclear facilities to inspection. As a result, the NPT will not achieve the required universality, and the danger of nuclear weapons will not be averted in the Middle East. Israel refused to abide by any international resolutions adopted in this regard, whether by the General Assembly, by the Security Council or by the IAEA. The most recent of these was resolution GC(46)/RES/16 of 20 September 2002, adopted during the forty-sixth regular session of the IAE General Conference.

Thirdly, the fact that Israel remains outside the NPT and the comprehensive safeguards regime of the IAEA continues to pose considerable concern and threats to peace and security, not only in the Middle East region but throughout the world.

The Chairman: I now give the floor to Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs.

Mr. Dhanapala: I should like to speak in relation to draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.35, on the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific.

As will be recalled, the Permanent Representative of Nepal addressed a letter to the Secretary-General, dated 22 August 2002, on the issue of the relocation of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, and asked that the letter be circulated as a document of this, the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly. The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Nepal, The Honourable Mr. Arjon Jung Bahaur Singh, also referred to that matter in a statement before the Assembly on 19 September 2002, as did the Permanent Representative of Nepal on 4 October this year during the general debate of the First Committee. It is obvious, therefore, that this is a matter of deep concern to Nepal. The United Nations and, I believe, Member States feel a similar commitment to finding a solution to this long-standing problem. That is one of the reasons why I felt compelled to address the Committee on the issue.

In a letter dated 27 September 2002, the Secretary-General replied to the Government of Nepal, drawing attention to the position of the United Nations, as set out in his report to the General Assembly contained in document A/57/260, and reaffirming his willingness to reach mutual accord on a host country agreement and on a memorandum of understanding. My Department would like an early implementation of the Secretary-General's stated readiness to find a swift solution, and it has sought to address the issue with a view to reaching an agreement that conforms to the rules and regulations of the United Nations as well as to international norms.

It should be noted that agreements inevitably vary from country to country, since they reflect the conditions existing in a particular country. The agreements proposed to Nepal for the Asia and Pacific Regional Centre were prepared in close consultation among the Department for Disarmament Affairs, the Office of Legal Affairs, the Controller's Office and the United Nations Development Programme in Kathmandu, just like any other host country agreement and memorandum of understanding prepared by the United Nations, and they reflect prevailing United Nations policies.

Another aspect that the United Nations is required to consider very seriously in order to proceed with the relocation of the Centre is the question of security — the security of its staff and the security of its premises. Security, as all will appreciate, is increasingly a matter of paramount importance, just as it is right here at Headquarters. These agreements must contain precise security requirements that cannot be ignored or negotiated. They incur costs that the United Nations has no mandate to bear by itself.

With regard to the need for a new host country agreement and a memorandum of understanding, there were several concerns that had to be dealt with. The previous agreements had been signed in 1988 and were considered outdated and insufficient for the present time. The world has changed dramatically since 1988, and the agreements had to reflect the new political and practical realities, including current costs. Therefore, new agreements were prepared that set forth, among other things, the details of the requirements for the effective relocation of the Centre, as well as the contribution to be made by the host Government. Similar revisions have had to be made in respect of the Lima and Lomé Centres.

I would like to stress that those new provisions are needed to avoid future financial difficulties that would impede the work of the Regional Centre; they were drafted in accordance with operative paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 55/34 H, which indicates that the Government of Nepal would "bear the operational cost of the Centre for it to function from Kathmandu".

The Secretariat has also agreed to Nepal's request that the sum of $63,000, which represents the accumulation of its voluntary contributions up to 1997, be set aside for the purpose of the initial establishment of the Regional Centre and for equipment and other facilities that would be required by the Centre.

In his response to the Nepalese Government's letter, the Secretary-General noted that the Secretariat was awaiting a favourable reply with regard to the proposed host country agreement, presented to Nepal on 6 December 2001 and the memorandum of understanding given to Nepal informally on 12 April and presented formally on 16 May 2002. He expressed the hope that an early and positive response would be forthcoming. The Department for Disarmament Affairs is determined to reach agreement with the Government of Nepal on any outstanding issues as soon as possible and welcomes the support of the members of this Committee to facilitate the effective operation of the Regional Centre.

I would like to close my remarks by reiterating the readiness of the United Nations and the Department

for Disarmament Affairs to cooperate with the Government of Nepal and Member States to seek feasible and satisfying solutions to the relocation of the Regional Centre. In that regard, I would suggest that Member States consider the possibility of supporting the relocation and operation of the Centre through direct contributions or ensuring the financial stability of the Centre. Any other solution that may be useful to overcome the present situation and enable the effective operation of the Regional Centre will be welcome.

We are united in the quest for a solution to that issue. I am convinced that a cooperative attitude among all Member States, the Government of Nepal and the Secretariat is the right means to bring this quest to an end.

The Chairman: In the exercise of the right of reply, I now give the floor to the representative of Israel.

Mr. Bar (Israel): First, let me congratulate you, Sir, on the effective and wise manner in which you run the deliberations of the First Committee and to offer you any help we can to continue that way. We also would like to take the opportunity and extend our condolences both to the people of Indonesia and the Philippines on the terrible terrorist attack they suffered. We fully share their feelings. We know how they feel.

Earlier this morning, my Egyptian colleague presented two draft resolutions that deal directly with the Middle East. While I share his hopes regarding one of the resolutions, namely a consensus support for the draft resolution on a nuclear-weapon-free zone, I am afraid that I do not share his call for support for the draft resolution on the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East.

We will be part of the consensus on the nuclear-weapon-free zone draft resolution, and we will describe, as usual, our detailed views and the modalities to enhance it. At the same time, we believe that one-sided and unbalanced draft resolutions aimed at isolating and alienating Israel, such as the draft resolution on the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East, do not contribute to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Moreover, they undermine the confidence and the climate of cooperation that are an essential basis for achieving that end, ignoring the complex reality of the region. Countries, particularly in the Middle East, should realize that those draft resolutions cannot be a substitute for the need to conduct direct negotiations, build confidence, reduce threats and establish stable, peaceful relations in the region, all of which are essential milestones on the way to a nuclear-weapon-free zone. We, therefore, urge those countries wishing to enhance the draft resolution on a nuclear-weapon-free zone to vote against the draft concerning the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East.

I wish to take the opportunity to call attention to a strained ritual repeated every year by countries that are not willing to participate in the mechanism of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, a minimally basic, voluntary mechanism. Yet, those countries take advantage of their rejectionist attitude in order to attack Israel with baseless accusations, offering ambitious and absurd proposals on how to strengthen the Register, while intending in reality to undermine that instrument.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.